

<b>MARGARET AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS PUBLIC HEARING</b> <b>SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AT PUBLIC HEARING (August 8, 2007)</b>			
<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Comment #</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Darrell Felling Terre Haute, IN	1	Concerned about the estimated cost of the project and where the funding will come from.	The estimates prepared for this project were developed per INDOT guidelines and only included construction costs. For the purposes of the Hearing the consultant was advised by INDOT to include design services in the estimate, thus raising the estimate. The estimates are a best guess of what actual costs may be and are used for planning purposes. Actual costs of the project could be less or more depending on the individual bids associated with each phase of the project. The City of Terre Haute is currently utilizing a \$7 million Federal earmark for the funding of Margaret Avenue and intends on acquiring additional Federal dollars after that \$7 million is used. Additionally, the City of Terre Haute plans on utilizing a Tax Increment Finance District, Economic Development Income Tax, State Transportation Enhancement Grants, and the Terre Haute Sanitary District as additional funding sources for the Margaret Avenue Corridor Project. There will not be any City property tax dollars spent on this project.
	2	The study did not evaluate sufficient alternatives.	The final corridor study analyzed multiple alternatives for the entire length of Margaret Avenue. The study addressed alternatives to the roadway typical section and horizontal alignments. The roadway cross-section alternative analysis consisted of existing and forecasted traffic volumes reviews to determine the number of lanes required to meet the traffic needs. Subsequently, the analysis reviewed the various applications of additional turn lanes, median treatments, bicycle lanes and sidewalks based on considerations for land use, access management and urban design principles. Horizontal alignment alternative analysis considered the recommended typical cross-section in conjunction with the environmental consequences, right of way impacts and maintenance of traffic.

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	3	Concerned the proposed project does not adequately address the traffic congestion at the CSX railroad crossing (19 <sup>th</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue).	The existing at-grade railroad crossing at 19 <sup>th</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue will be eliminated with this project. This will occur in one of two ways, either a grade separated crossing (underpass or overpass) or the relocation of the railroad tracks.
	4	Evaluation of historic properties did not identify the Bettenbrock Farm, which is historic.	<p>An evaluation of all properties located within 300 feet of Margaret Avenue was conducted, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. That evaluation did not identify any buildings, structures, districts, objects or archaeological sites listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. This evaluation was reviewed, and approved, by the Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer and the Federal Highway Administration.</p> <p>Although the referenced property may have a significant role in the local history of the area, it was not identified as a property listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register, which is the required criteria for evaluation.</p>
	5	Evaluation of historic properties did not identify the Dickerson Cemetery, located west of SR 46, near the Wal-Mart.	<p>An archaeological reconnaissance was conducted as part of the environmental evaluation. The archaeological investigation included a review of historical documents on the area, including known cemeteries within the proposed right-of-way. The referenced cemetery is not located within the proposed right-of-way area.</p> <p>If it is determined that the proposed roadway improvements will impact an area within 100 feet of the cemetery, a development plan will be prepared in accordance with State law regulating cemeteries.</p>

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	6	Concerned the proposed new alignment segment of the roadway is being created for the benefit of a select few, rather than average citizens.	The proposed improvement of Margaret Avenue will enhance multi-modal transportation safety, mobility and connectivity for a wide variety of trip purposes either through or within the corridor for all users. Margaret Avenue is a public thoroughfare and a significant arterial corridor within the Terre Haute/Vigo County urbanized area for east-west traffic movements. Intersection safety and roadway capacity will increase for all users within the proposed corridor alignment with the use of nationally accepted design standards.
Kathy Sturgeon Terre Haute, IN	7	Concerned about the amount of farm land that will be lost to the proposed project and subsequent development.	Area is already converting from agricultural to other uses. Proximity to the I-70 Interchange will continue to push this area towards more commercialized or Industrialized uses. The proposed project will directly convert approximately 22 acres of existing farmland. This conversion is approximately 0.01% of the total farmland in Vigo County. The development of this area, including development of the proposed roadway, is consistent with the Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan and the Vigo County Comprehensive Plan.
	8	Additional options/alternative should be developed rather than the proposed project.	See response to comment #2
Karin Felling Terre Haute, IN	9	Concerned that there are few straight roads in the area, and the proposed alignment will add curves so that people will have to travel out of their way.	The intersection and roadway alignment designs for the Margaret Avenue corridor will use nationally accepted design standards to enhance multi-modal transportation safety, mobility and connectivity for a wide variety of trip purposes either through or within the corridor for all users. Development of the proposed roadway will provide safe accessibility for a mixture of existing and anticipated future land uses, including single family/multi-family residential development, commercial, industrial/warehouse distribution and natural/open space areas. The proposed improvement will reduce travel time delays with improved intersection and roadway capacity throughout the entire Margaret Avenue corridor.

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Linda Langer Terre Haute, IN	10	Concerned about children crossing the proposed wider roadway.	The proposed design includes pedestrian facilities which are currently lacking throughout the corridor. These include sidewalks on both sides of the roadway along with cross walks and signalized pedestrian indicators (WALK/DON'T WALK) at major intersections. The proposed design also includes updates and modifications to the school crosswalk and warning signals at 11 <sup>th</sup> Street. Additionally to enhance pedestrian safety, the design includes roadway lighting and enhancements/amenities which will increase the visibility of pedestrian crossings at the intersections and at the school crossing.
Anita Jackson Terre Haute, IN	11	Does not believe congestion and impacts to emergency routes/access have been adequately considered.	Constructing additional traffic lanes, improving existing intersections, and improving the overall roadway surface conditions and storm drainage are all elements of the proposed project which will be reflected in increased motorist and pedestrian safety. Reduced congestion in the corridor will facilitate access to and through the area for emergency services, school buses, and the local motoring public.
	12	Existing railroad crossing at 19 <sup>th</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue significantly impacts emergency access.	See response to comment #3.
Robert Flott Terre Haute, IN	13	Concerned about inconsistency regarding estimated costs reported during public hearing, in press releases and in the environmental document.	The overall variance in the cost estimates is not considered to be significant since the project will be built over a period of several years and the cost of construction materials may vary significantly over the coming years.

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	14	Concerned about the proposed amenities that may increase the cost of the project.	During the corridor study development process, two public meetings were held, a year apart, with approximately 250 in attendance for both meetings. Alternatives for the corridor were described and illustrated to the attendees and a survey was passed out for comments. In those surveys the public was asked several questions related to the development and to the look and feel for the Margaret Avenue corridor. One question asked "Do you agree or disagree that the Margaret Avenue Corridor should have a distinctive visual quality?" of which 74.5% agreed. Also, it was asked "Do you agree or disagree that changes to Margaret Avenue should be used to create opportunities for new development, redevelopment and revitalization strategically aligned with community economic development?" of which 84.1% agreed. The results and input from the two public meetings were incorporated in the development of the Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan. Given the responses from those meetings, the plan depicts a Margaret Avenue that the community selected. The proposed amenities provide a consensus look and feel desired and are key elements in establishing pedestrian connectivity and safety throughout the corridor.
	15	The reported cost per mile of the project is excessive, approximately \$14.6 million which is roughly the same as I-69.	The costs of the proposed Margaret Avenue improvements versus those of a future I-69 project are not comparable. Current cost estimate for Margaret Avenue is \$10.8 million per mile, not \$14.6 million as claimed. This is less than half the per mile cost of I-69, with some estimates putting it at less than one-third. In addition, Margaret Avenue is a dense urban roadway and design must consider not only the road itself but all the related property access, non-motorized accessibility, varied land use, and connection to all side streets, none of which are considerations on an interstate highway.

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Eva Kor Terre Haute, IN	16	Concerned there has been inadequate public involvement in the development of this project.	The City has conducted a series of public information meetings relative to the proposed Margaret Avenue corridor improvement. Those meetings were properly advertised and well attended. Press coverage was included prior to, during, and following the public information meetings. Additionally, development of the environmental document for this project included consultation with multiple local agencies.
	17	Does not believe the existing traffic congestion warrants the estimated cost of the project.	The need for this project has been identified through the local metropolitan transportation planning process for decades. The transportation plan evaluates existing and future traffic conditions and recommends a network of interconnected roadways which are capable of serving the needs of the public for a period 20 years into the future. Additionally, Margaret Avenue currently does not serve a wide variety of multi-modal transportation mobility needs. The Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan recommends the development of multi-modal corridor improvements.
	18	Concerned about the source of funding for the project.	See response to comment #1.
Joseph Selliken Terre Haute, IN	19	Does not agree with the proposed purpose of the project, to get from SR 46 to SR 63.	The overall improvement serves local traffic having shorter trip lengths as well as traffic having longer trip lengths. In reality, only a small percentage of the total traffic anticipated to use improved Margaret Avenue would be expected to travel the whole distance from SR 63 to SR 46, but the improved corridor will provide improved levels of service for the more intermediate trip lengths as well as the longer distance trips.

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	20	Believes real traffic issues are between 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street and 7 <sup>th</sup> Street, and that remaining project is a waste of money.	The more immediate need for improvement does lie between 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> Streets; hence, that segment is the next phase for construction. This project has been included in the local transportation planning process for several years. The transportation plan evaluates existing and future traffic conditions and attempts to provide a network of interconnected roadways which are capable of serving the needs of the motoring public for a period 20 years into the future. While existing traffic conditions may not appear to warrant the improvement, the transportation plan anticipates a need for increased capacity on the Margaret Avenue corridor.
	21	Believes the true purpose is to route traffic from Indianapolis by the new Wal-Mart.	The proposed Margaret Avenue improvements will have little impact on the accessibility of the new Wal-Mart to Indianapolis residents.
	22	Concerned there is bigger plan of the project to connect the area with new gaming facilities.	Indiana state law does not allow for the development of any gaming facilities which would be serviced by the proposed Margaret Avenue improvements.
Carolyn Ives Terre Haute, IN	23	Proposed alignment shifts (area of 25 <sup>th</sup> Street to Fruitridge) affects three homes, but avoids vacant farm fields.	Alignment shifts are proposed to minimize potential relocation of residential and/or commercial properties. Although some right-of-way will be acquired from existing residential properties, overall relocations have been minimized by the proposed slight shifts in the roadway alignment.
	24	Concerned that alignment shifts protect only the newer homes, not older homes in the area	The proposed alignment shift will minimize the amount of right-of-way needed from residential and commercial properties, and avoid relocation of existing residences.

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	25	Concerned proposed 8-foot wide sidewalk will become a trail, which will create areas for vandalism.	Virtually the entire Margaret Avenue corridor is currently devoid of sidewalks and therefore presents unacceptable safety and mobility hazards for all non-motorized citizens. The addition of sidewalks to the Margaret Avenue corridor will increase safety, mobility and transportation system connectivity for all non-motorized citizens consistent with national and state policy. The proposed sidewalks along the Margaret Avenue corridor shall become a component of the Terre Haute trail and greenway network that is designed to encourage alternative transportation, reduce congestion, improve air quality, and provide safe alternatives to citizens who choose to use bicycles or walking as a means of transportation within or outside of the Margaret Avenue corridor. Numerous national and state sponsored studies clearly demonstrate that the installation of sidewalks, trails, and associated connectivity to greenway networks lead to a decrease in vandalism or similar crimes given increased mobility and visibility of citizens throughout a given area.
John Heaton Terre Haute, IN	26	Agrees with identified needs, as traffic is backed up in front of his business from the intersection of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue.	No response required.
	27	Unsure whether traffic congestion at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue has been resolved.	Detailed traffic engineering analysis does indicate an improvement in congestion experienced at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street/Margaret Avenue.
	28	Overall, is in support of the project to improve the corridor, as it has been needed for awhile.	No response required.



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Barbara Stoffer Terre Haute, IN  August 8, 2007	1	Guidelines provided for appraisals (FHWA brochures) do not discuss cost of losing rental property or cost of relocating equipment.	Federal requirements established under the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act provide for fair market value compensation and relocation assistance for all individuals, land owners, and businesses that are directly impacted by land acquisition activities. Detailed assistance shall be provided to after the approval of final design plans in accordance with federal law.
	2	Business has very sensitive equipment which will be affected by construction. Likely will need to move to rental property while new building is built – are these costs included in reimbursements?	Those costs would be subject to discussion/negotiation as the right-of-way acquisition process advances through the appraisal stage into the relocation stage in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act.
William and Carolyn Hall Terre Haute, IN  August 10, 2007	3	Concerned about flooding, as presently there is inadequate drainage to Thompson Ditch.	The proposed roadway improvement will also include improvements to storm drainage within the project limits.
	4	Will property be affected by flooding during and following construction of new roadway?	It is anticipated that the project design will adequately accommodate storm runoff. The respondent is advised to contact the design engineer during the design phase to make the designer aware of any specific localized drainage deficiencies.
Marlene Smith Terre Haute, IN  August 10, 2007	5	Access to Kensington Subdivision from Margaret Avenue has not been addressed. Presently the only access to this subdivision is from Margaret Avenue.	Access to the area will be maintained at all times during the construction period.
	6	When will plans for the overall project and projected costs be made public?	As noted in the Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan, all project plans and associated estimated costs have been in the public domain for several years. Copies of Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan are available via CD-ROM or through the City of Terre Haute's website. Any estimate of cost developed at this time is preliminary for planning purposes only and is limited by the overall lack of design detail currently available. As subsequent phases of the corridor are designed those design plans and associated cost estimates will be made available to the public through the Engineering Department of the City of Terre Haute.

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Gene & Kathleen Hopkins Terre Haute, IN  August 21, 2007	7	Margaret Avenue does not need to be a 4-lane boulevard with sidewalks, especially east of 25 <sup>th</sup> Street.	Given Margaret Avenue's role as a major public thoroughfare and arterial transportation corridor, the Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan is designed to address current traffic volumes and projected traffic volumes resulting from associated land uses. The need for this project has been identified through the local metropolitan transportation planning process for decades. The transportation plan evaluates existing and future traffic conditions and recommends a network of interconnected roadways which are capable of serving the needs of the public for a period 20 years into the future. Additionally, Margaret Avenue currently does not serve a wide variety of multi-modal transportation mobility needs. The Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan recommends the development of multi-modal corridor improvements.
	8	The railroad crossing near 19 <sup>th</sup> Street needs to be addressed first.	The existing at-grade railroad crossing at 19 <sup>th</sup> Street and Margaret Avenue will be eliminated with this project. This will occur in one of two ways, either a grade separated crossing (underpass or overpass) or the relocation of the railroad tracks.
	9	The railroad crossing adjacent to Thompson Ditch (Indiana Railroad) also has significant congestion and should be addressed in this plan.	In the design phase of this segment of Margaret Avenue the at-grade crossing will be evaluated to determine the need for a grade separated crossing or a new at-grade crossing.
	10	The new alignment section, east of Fruitridge Avenue, takes too much farmland.	Area is already converting from agricultural to other uses. Proximity to the I-70 Interchange will continue to push this area towards more commercialized or Industrialized uses. The proposed project will directly convert approximately 22 acres of existing farmland. This conversion is approximately 0.01% of the total farmland in Vigo County. The development of this area, including development of the proposed roadway, is consistent with the Margaret Avenue Corridor Plan and the Vigo County Comprehensive Plan.

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Gene & Kathleen Hopkins Terre Haute, IN	11	The proposed alignment takes too much land from existing residential properties and appears to avoid vacant land.	Alignment shifts are proposed to minimize potential relocation of residential and/or commercial properties. Although some right-of-way will be acquired from existing residential properties, overall relocations have been minimized by the proposed slight shifts in the roadway alignment.